IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A network device, comprising:

~~a)~~ at least one port to receive multiple calls and to allow the network device to communicate directly with a gatekeeper;

~~b)~~ at least two call processors, operable to convert incoming call data associated with the multiple calls into outgoing call data;

~~c)~~ a memory operable to store call identifications and any call processor identification associated with those call identifications;

~~d)~~ a central processing unit, operable to:

~~i)~~ access the memory to determine if a call is already associated with a call processor;

~~ii) to~~ assign a call processor if none is assigned; and

~~iii)~~ update the memory to reflect new assignments.

2. (Original) The network device of claim 1, wherein the network device is a gateway.

3. (Original) The network device of claim 1, wherein the network device is a router.

4. (Original) The network device of claim 1, wherein the central processing unit is one of the call processors.

5. (Original) The network device of claim 1, wherein the memory further comprises ternary content addressable memory.

6. (Currently amended) A method of controlling outgoing calls in a gateway, the method comprising:

~~e)~~ receiving a call setup message directly from a gatekeeper for a call from a sending device;

~~f)~~ determining if a call processor is associated with the call;

~~g)~~ locating a call processor that has the least amount of processing load, if no call processor is associated with the call;

~~h)~~ routing the setup message to the call processor with the least amount of load; and

~~i)~~ establishing a connection between the call processor and the sending device.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the call setup message is sent with fast start open logical channel.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the call setup message is in accordance with H.225.

9. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the call setup message is encapsulated in a UDP packet.

10. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein establishing a connection between the call setup message and the sending device further comprises establishing a logical channel in accordance with H.245.

11. (Currently amended) A network device, comprising:

~~j)~~ a connection means, including directly between a gateway and a gatekeeper;

~~k)~~ at least two processing means for converting incoming call data into outgoing call data;

~~l)~~ a means for storing call identifications and any call processor associated with those call identifications;

~~m)~~ means for:

~~i)~~ accessing the memory to determine if a call is already associated with a call processor;

~~ii)~~ assigning a call processor if none is assigned; and

~~iii)~~ updating the memory to reflect new assignments.

12. (Currently amended) The network device of claim 11~~12~~, wherein the means for accessing the memory is one of the at least two processing means.

13. (Currently amended) The network device of claim 11~~12~~, wherein the means for storing call identifications further comprises a ternary content addressable memory.

14. (Currently amended) An article containing machine-readable code that, when executed, causes the machine to:

~~n)~~ receive a call setup message directly from a gatekeeper for a call from a sending device;

~~o)~~ determine if a call processor is associated with the call;

~~p)~~ locate a call processor that has the least amount of processing load, if no call processor is associated with the call;

~~q)~~ route the setup message to the call processor with the least amount of load; and

~~r)~~ establish a connection between the call processor and the sending device.

15. (Original) The article of claim 14, wherein the machine is a network device.

16. (Original) The article of claim 14, wherein the machine is a gateway.

17. (Original) The article of claim 14, wherein the code causing the machine to establish a connection between the call processor and the sending device is in compliance with H.245.

18. (Original) The article of claim 14, wherein the setup message complies with H.225.